

WEST DEREHAM

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING REPORT 2014-15

West Dereham Parish Councillors

NAME	ADDRESS	CONTACT
Mrs Pam Bullas	The Hollies, Station Road, West Dereham, PE33 9RR	501287
Mrs Claire Cann Chairman	The Old Rectory, St Andrew's Walk, West Dereham, PE33 9RT	501540
Mr Tom Foy	10 Church Road, West Dereham, PE33 9RF	501222
Mrs Lorraine Hunt	Open View, The Row, West Dereham, PE33 9RH	07917-865025
Ms Paula Kellingray	9 Church Close, West Dereham, PE33 9RR	500256
Mrs Claire Page	1 Chequers Cottages, Station Road, West Dereham, PE33 9RR	500793
Mrs Pam Walker	Fiddler's Roof, The Row, West Dereham, PE33 9RH	501426

The clerk to the Parish Council is:

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**Record of West Dereham Annual Parish Meeting
held in West Dereham Village Hall on Thursday 30 April 2015 at 7.30pm**

In the chair: Mrs Claire Cann - Chairman of West Dereham Parish Council.

13 parishioners were in attendance.

1. The Chairman of the Parish Council welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting. Apologies had been received from Mr Andrew Sisley (Village Handyman) who was working away from home.

2. Copies of the record of the 2014 Annual Parish Meeting had been delivered to all households in West Dereham and a copy was also available to view on the projector at the meeting on 30 April 2015. It was agreed that the report was a true account of the meeting held on 10 April 2014.

3. Parish Council Report (given by Claire Cann)

General

The PC has held twelve public meetings since the last APM. Three have been attended by the County Councillor and two by the Borough Councillor. Every household in the village has been individually informed of each meeting via a monthly Village Magazine as well as the noticeboards and the PC Website.

The PC has maintained a full complement of Councillors.

Precept

In December, after four months of public discussion, the precept was not raised beyond the rate of inflation.

Training

The Parish Clerk and Councillors have attended the Norfolk Association of Local Councils Summer and Autumn Conferences, two NALC area meetings, a Parliamentary Outreach seminar, Chairmanship training and Elections Training. Councillors have self funded 100% of the cost of courses attended.

Staff

The PC appointed a new Village handyman in September 2014. Andrew Sisley has been an invaluable colleague and has made visible improvements to the village. A separate report will follow the Parish Council's.

Quality Status

The system for recognition of a Parish Council's professionalism has changed. WD already held Quality Status and now hold Foundation Status of the new Local Council Award Scheme. The PC will shortly be applying for the next level of recognition.

Website

In December last year the PC changed its website for a free one enabled by Norfolk Parishes. This is more user friendly for the Clerk and presentationally more attractive for the village.

Policies

New policies adopted by the PC in the last year include:

Handling Complaints

Co-option to the PC

Lighting within the Parish

Policies that were reviewed and agreed include:

The Code of Conduct

PC Risk Assessment

Allotment Contract and Fees

Publication scheme

Data Protection Policy

Business Continuity Plan

Clerk's Job Description, Contract and Appraisal

Handyman's Job Description

Training Policy

Cemetery Risk Assessment

Community Engagement Policy

Equal Opportunities Policy

Travel and Expenses Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Media Relations Policy

Grievance and Disciplinary Policy

Digital Mapping Software

The software purchased from Pear Technology has been installed on the Clerk's PC Laptop and on those of some Councillors. It has already been used to map the Cemetery and for the village grass and hedge cutting contract.

Allotments

A separate report will be provided by the Allotments Liaison Officer. In July last year the PC agreed that allotment holders should provide a refundable deposit so that if an abandoned plot had to be cleared and re-instated the cost did not fall to the village. The PC carried out allotment inspections on 28 June, 6 September and 6 December 2014 and 14 March 2015. The PC considers that the allotments are in very good condition and wishes to thank Richard French for his immense contribution to the village in this aspect.

Farm Business Tenancy

Last summer another over-spraying incident was reported to the Environment Agency who investigated it and all parties agreed there had been no damage.

Police

Unfortunately the Police have not attended a single one of the twelve PC meetings since the last APM; nor have they produced many reports even when reminded. The PC, who has previously complained to the Chief Constable, wrote to the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office who said this was not a matter for them. The senior officer at DM Police Station said that there should be a police presence at two meetings a year but a report should always be sent to every meeting. The PC was offered the option of paying £16,000 p.a. (greater than the precept) to cover 50% of the cost of the PCSO but the PC declined on the basis that a large percentage of Council Tax already funds the police. Incidents in the village involving the police in the past year have included speeding vehicles, motorbikes and quad bikes causing a nuisance and village planters being vandalised.

War Memorial

The village War Memorial currently appears on the list of assets of St Andrew's Church although the Diocese is not interested in maintaining it. Since war memorials were intended to be property of their villages, although no records can be found relating to West Dereham's, the PC has added it to the list of village assets and undertaken to maintain it.

Cemetery

In line with the digital mapping of the cemetery to increase the accuracy of records, the PC agreed that all future headstones should include the plot number on the back. The Parish Council also approved a design for the new cemetery brick pillars and gates. Over the winter, over one thousand hedging plants were planted at the cemetery – these were obtained free from both the Woodland Trust Community Trees Scheme and the DEFRA Big Tree Plant Scheme and will go a long way towards making the cemetery more attractive and less windy.

Broadband

In May last year the PC was told by BBforN that BB was expected in the village by September. By July there was no longer a date and by November it had become 'sometime in 2015'. The PC wrote to Liz Truss MP and asked her to intervene. The response from BBforN included the two phrases "roll out order is governed by (County) Council's objective to achieve maximum coverage for the money" and "if major problems are encountered we press on with work elsewhere"

Karen O'Kane from BBforN attended the PC's March 2015 meeting and gave a presentation. The PC has been assured that BB for WD will be in place by the end of this year.

Phone Boxes

In September last year the PC formally adopted the two redundant and vandalised phone boxes in the village. They will be renovated and residents will be asked to suggest ideas for their use.

Post Boxes

The Church Road post box has been straightened up and painted and the Clerk is chasing Royal Mail who had agreed to do the same to the Station Road box.

Dog Waste Bins

In 2014-15 financial year two additional dog waste bins were purchased and installed on the Church Road/Station Road/Hilgay Road triangle and on the green at St Andrew's Close. A fourth bin has been purchased at the beginning of the 2015-16 financial year and will be installed at The Row end of the Village Hall footpath.

Oil Fuel Buying Scheme

The PC joined the Norfolk Rural Community Scheme which enables residents to register at no extra cost with the scheme which results in an average cost saving of 9%.

Grass/Hedge cutting contract

The PC has just signed the new contract with CGM which increases most of the grass cutting to regular weekly cuts rather than every 12-14 days.

Highways

The PC was unsuccessful in getting Highways to agree to some 20 mph speed limits in the village, nor would they agree to a STOP sign at the West Dereham/Church Road Old School junction even though it is impossible to see traffic coming from the left from the white line on West Dereham Road. They have also declined to re-instate the triangle and the PC remains very concerned at the unsafe nature of this junction.

Highways are currently considering the PC's request for additional signage on the A134 to discourage huge vehicles travelling down Lime Kiln Road and tearing branches off the trees at the old lime pits.

Willow Lane Footpath

The PC was involved in lengthy discussions with NCC about the re-instatement of the Willow Lane footpath. In spite of agreement from the landowners concerned who proposed a minimal detour around the edge of the property, and a resulting continuation of a permissive footpath by a neighbouring farmer, NCC refused to co-operate and tried to force the PC to agree without expressing their concerns. Finally NCC's trump card was to threaten a legal procedure which they said would devalue the property and the PC was obliged to go along with NCC but it recorded its disapproval of their behaviour and tactics.

Grange Farm

In November 2013 the PC and a number of villagers complained to Norfolk Property Services when the new tenants of Grange Farm tore up the hedgerows and vegetation at one of the old lime pits on Lime Kiln Road (which form part of their tenancy) and dumped farm waste and detritus there, destroying the wildlife habitat. In spite of lengthy communication with NCC and NPS who were most uncooperative, the Environment Agency report found that "waste consisted of soil and stone, construction and demolition material, baling twine, metal, wood, and plastics" had been dumped and must be removed. This was done. However the PC has fought a simultaneous battle to obtain information on the implications of the Grange Farm pig operation which is on the far side of the A134 but which the PC understands is planned to cover the top fields either side of Lime Kiln Road. The PC has been trying to arrange a date to visit the farm and farmer since September last year. In February this year the PC visited a neighbour of the pig farm at West Bilney and was very disturbed by what it learnt.

Frimstone

In October last year Frimstone applied to extend for a second time their operation at their North Quarry, shortly before the deadline to close it. The South Quarry opened on the premise that the North Quarry would close. The PC objected on the grounds that Frimstone must be aware of their wish not to close operations long before they go public. The PC has asked Frimstone to attend a PC meeting to answer questions about their operations and plans for the area.

Wissington

In December last year British Sugar made a planning application for top soil recycling. The PC did not object to the application but raised concerns about the resulting increase in their traffic on the A134 which would double in January, March and May and quadruple in April. The letter from NCC to the PC did not address the PC's concerns. The PC made a Freedom of Information request to the police to obtain statistics on Road Traffic Incidents on the A134 which showed that RTIs had doubled in the second half of the last decade. NCC are currently considering the facts.

Glazewing

Glazewing continues to be a poor neighbour to West Dereham. Regular complaints include rubbish and litter blowing into fields; reversing alarms sounding outside homes before 07.00; vehicle movements on Bank Holidays; shower door falling from a passing skip; vehicles mounting kerbs round corners; artic vehicles using Lime Kiln Road and travelling the length of the village; artic vehicles using Ryston Road; GW employees speeding to and from work through the village; residents having to pull onto verge to avoid being hit by a GW lorry and constant unsocial hours traffic which GW refuse to quantify.

GW's most recent planning application for a 9 metre high baler building was objected to by the PC and all villagers who attended an extra public meeting. The County Councillor asked for the application to be referred to NCC's Planning Committee. In spite of 3 local County Councillors objecting to the baler NCC gave permission. GW said the baler would not increase traffic but last month applied to increase their Vehicle Operating Licence to allow an extra 8 vehicles and 21 trailers at WD.

At the end of last year the Environment Agency reported on their website that GW had been fined for selling contaminated waste which was spread on local farm land.

In response to complaints from individual villagers the Environment Agency said it is dealing with several issues at the GW site.

PC Assesses Inspection

This took place on 7 March 2015 and the PC is pleased to record that a number of assets are now in good condition.

- a. Allotment gates have now been secured and require no further action; however hedging and fencing on one side of the allotments required attention at the site and the Clerk is to contact the relevant owner.

- b. Phone boxes on Station Road and Church Road have now been adopted by the PC and their refurbishment is being considered. The area behind the phone box in Church Road was strewn with rubbish and the Handyman was tasked with clearing it.
- c. The Bert Starling seat and the Joyce Smith seat on Church Road are both in good condition following refurbishment in the last couple of years.
- d. Kerbing on corner at Old School, Church Road has become damaged by HGVs and needs repairing again and possible installation of reflector posts to prevent further damage. Clerk to report to Highways.
- e. Village Signs. Both signs are in need of major repairs or replacement. Clerk to obtain quotations and for discussion at future PC meetings.
- f. Village Notice Boards. Both are in good condition and no action needed.
- g. NCC signposts at junction of Church Road/Wereham Road; in triangle at junction of Church Road/Station Road/Hilgay Road; at junction of Church Road/Bath Road and at junction of Lime Kiln Road/Ryston Road are in poor condition and need to be rubbed down and repainted. Handyman to action.
- h. Stocks Bridge (road and footpath) and bridge on Church Road near Hudson's Garage were re-painted last year and only need washing down. Handyman to action.
- i. Dog waste bin on Church Road in good condition. No action required.
- j. Planters on Church Road both need feeding and retreating, and south planter needed more bulbs. Handyman to action.
- k. Bus Shelter on Church Road in good condition but needs algae removing from exterior brickwork. Handyman to action.
- l. Post Box on Church Road has been repositioned and repainted but the same is required for Post Box on Station Road. Clerk to re contact Royal Mail.
- m. Cemetery gates have been temporarily repaired and new gates and pillars are planned for 2015/16.
- n. Eddie Drew seat in cemetery needs cleaning and wood retreating. Clerk to contact family.
- o. Doug Hawes seat in cemetery still needs cleaning and wood retreating. Family details not known.
- p. War Memorial still to be inspected.
- q. Recreation Field off Ryston Road needs new goal posts and nets and consider basketball hoop. Clerk to obtain quotes.
- r. Bridges at the following locations need rubbing down and repainting: on Ryston Road near The Row; near Watering Cottages; at the junction of Basil Road/Hilgay Road; on Basil Road bend at junction with Bars Hall Farm and junction with Brookes Lane. Handyman to action.
- s. Post and railings at junction of Church Road/Station Road/Hilgay Road needs weeding at base, cleaning and repainting. Handyman to action.

Thanks

The Chairman wanted to place on record her thanks to fellow Parish Councillors who give up large amounts of personal time for their village and its residents, and the PC would like to express its deep appreciation of our first class Clerk because as everyone knows a PC is only as good as its Clerk.

4. Handyman report (written by Andrew Sisley and given by the Clerk to the PC)

Since taking on the role of Village handyman last September, the following work has been completed;

The lower branches on the large tree adjacent to Stocks Bridge have been trimmed back

The bridge adjacent to Hudson's garage has been re-painted and the brickwork re-pointed

The bus shelter has been cleaned out, the walls painted and 2 coats of anti-graffiti paint have been applied. The oak fascia boards have been treated with wood preservative.

An assessment has been made of the condition of the 2 disused telephone boxes adopted by the Parish council for repair. The glass has been removed from both boxes.

The stone plinth on the village sign north was repointed in November, but is again cracked (ref village asset inspection report).

On two separate occasions, all the litter has been cleared from Church road, a large quantity of empty drinks containers being the most common item found and on both occasions filling 2 black bin bags.

The two planters in Church road have been cleared of weeds on several occasions, and the dwarf conifer from the planter closest to the old school house has been recovered from the ditch and replanted after vandals discarded it there.

The public footpath sign in Station Road has been put back up.

Two new dog waste bins have been installed, one the junction of Hilgay Road and Station Road and one in the recreation field in St Andrews Close.

I am currently working on the list generated from the asset inspection carried out in March, and I shall be painting the NCC sign posts identified in the coming days.

5. Allotment report for 2014 (given by Richard C. French)

The year was on average warmer than normal and this showed up in the excellent tomato crops harvested by tenants who grew them. Outside crops did particularly well.

The vacant plot was cleaned up during the year and is now ready for another tenant. Two new tenants have found it harder than anticipated, one gave up altogether and the other reduced his holding to a quarter plot.

Several tenants were able to offer some surplus fruit and vegetable for the Harvest Festival Supper held in September and these were sold off and made about £25.00 for St. Andrews Church Fund. It is hoped that this will continue for future festivals.

There were no occurrences worth nothing other than the usual problems with the wild life as wood pigeons and rooks continue to make it essential to keep crops protected in some way. This does tend to make the plots look a little rag tag and untidy but unfortunately this cannot be helped.

I feel I should just draw attention to the fact that there have been a number of tenants in recent years who have given up after just one season. This is mainly due to inexperience and the notion that one can sow seeds and plant crops in March then go away for 3 months and expect to come back and harvest the results. It does not work like that I'm afraid and you need to spend at least 2 hours week working the plot to have any hope of success.

There are a number of vacant plots, a full size area or a quarter, all in good clean condition ready to plant up.

6. Village Hall Report (given by Paula Kellingray)

The village hall continues to prove a very valuable meeting place for many in the village. Bookings are increasing covering everything from birthday parties, weddings, and funerals, to corporate training days. The addition of children's activity days sponsored by St. Andrew's Church have proved very popular and we thank the church for organising these events.

Attendances at our regular events such as coffee mornings, bingos, and quiz nights are all rising. £5 supper nights continue to be well attended with many people contributing food to help raise funds for the hall. The summer barbecues are always popular and begin again next month.

The fish and chip charity supper nights at the hall this last year raised just over £1,200 for local charities. This brings the total raised in the first 3 years to a very respectable £3,750. A huge thank-you to all those who have joined us and helped to raise this money.

Over the past 12 months we have celebrated the following in the hall:

- All the National Patron Saints Days
- The beginning of the first world war with a candlelight vigil in the Abbey Room which was a great success.
- Both an Armed Forces Day Event and a Remembrance Sunday Lunch which are now permanent fixtures in the annual calendar.

The hall provided a collection point for the village to donate items for us to send parcels out to 2 severing personnel in Afghanistan with connections to West Dereham. We sent 3 parcels out and these were gratefully received.

In addition to the above, we have provided 3 live entertainment evenings as well as a New Year's Eve party.

A new venture, started this year, has been to have DVDs and books on sale for donations to the hall funds and this has now been in operation for 3 months and has raised £80 for hall funds.

The bar has seen an increase in its general use on our village nights and it is always nice to welcome new faces.

Christmas Day continues to be one of the highlights of the year for many villagers bringing the community together before going home for Christmas with the family.

The hall with the aid of the bar continues to forge new friendships and I would like to share with you 2 messages I received this year which I think sums up the success of the hall.

"As much as my husband and I, then my friend and I enjoyed lovely holidays, there is always something special about coming back to West Dereham and the village hall. Thank-you for being there"

And:

"My friend and I would never have met but for the village hall and there we were living and laughing it off whilst abroad! A feather in West Dereham Village Hall's cap."

That's just 2 of the many nice comments we receive about the hall.

It only remains for me, on behalf of the village hall committee, to thank all the volunteers and supporters for all their input over the past year, and to remind the village that there is always a friendly welcome at the hall and we look forward to meeting more of YOU in the forthcoming year.

7. West Dereham Village Trust Report (given by Pam Walker)

There has been little to report for the past year. Two members of the committee have resigned leaving 3 members on the committee.

The Village Hall continues to pay back the loan incurred during the extension and rebuild/refurbishment of the hall. This repayment is a slow process but both the Village Hall and the Village Trust committees consider that it is important to do so.

8. West Dereham Heritage Group Report for 2014/15 (given by Jack Walker)

It has been yet another successful year for the group with a varied and interesting programme, so much so that we have had to reduce our "round the table" sessions so that we can accommodate the many topics we have been able to bring to the group. The year has been covered by guest speakers and outings, ranging from "Dark Goings on in Manea" to a planned visit to learn about the code breakers of Bletchley Park. Once again we have enjoyed the company and knowledge of Dr. Paul Richards on another of his historic walks in King's Lynn and also Richard French's infectious enthusiasm on one of his guided walks around West Dereham.

Unfortunately we have had to say goodbye to one or two members due to them moving away or anno domini.

However the good news is that new buds have grown to replace the older ones. We have a full programme for the rest of the year and are already planning for 2016. The group has been well supported by members and friends at all the talks and activities and continues to move forward. With the help of members, the committee has worked very hard to produce the programme of events and to research several exciting projects, very recently attending a museum in Cambridge to view a statue of one of the monks from West Dereham Abbey.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members for their support and encouragement of the group.

9. West Dereham Royal British Legion (given by Nick Cann)

On 2 November 2013, the first meeting of the West Dereham Branch Royal British Legion (WDBRBL) was held and 16 people from the village subsequently confirmed their membership. On 13 February 2014, we were granted the branch number of BR 3689 and Peter Starling was elected Branch Chairman. Since the accounting year ends 30 September and membership is renewed annually in October, joining mid-year in 2014 was discounted by County HQ. We therefore became effective as a branch on 1 October 2014.

Nick Cann acts as Branch Secretary and Treasurer, Jack Walker is the 'Responsible Officer' who ensures that the Treasurer complies with the Branch's by-laws, and banking has been arranged with Lloyds Bank in King's Lynn. Tom Foy is the Branch Standard Bearer and Paula Kellingray acts as the Poppy Appeal Co-ordinator. The original West Dereham Standard from 1955, properly dedicated, is currently being used. In due course, a new Standard will be commissioned. Arrangements are in hand for Tom to receive Standard Bearer training in Norwich, on 7 May 2015.

On 4 August 2014 at 10pm, a 'Lights Out' ceremony was held at the War Memorial with a reception afterwards in the Village Hall, remembering 100 years ago and the outbreak of the First World War. A meeting and lunch for the branch was held on Sunday 7 September. On Sunday 9 November, members and villagers shared a Service of Remembrance at St. Andrew's Church followed by lunch in the Village Hall. The Village Hall is holding an event in May to mark the 70th anniversary of the ending of the Second World War in Europe and it is hoped that as many members of our branch as possible will support this event. The next branch meeting will take place in June.

By-laws have been written and issued electronically to those members who have e-mail addresses, with County HQ included. Hard copies will be issued shortly to those without an email facility. Four meetings each year were agreed, in March, June (Armed Forces Day is the last Sunday in June) and October (being the AGM, receipt of annual accounts and to consider arrangements on Remembrance Day). The fourth meeting, which will not be minuted independently, is on Remembrance Day (the second Sunday in November). This is considered to be an event for the whole village.

The strength of the branch has increased from 16 to 22 with another in the pipeline. There are two Legion members in the village not of our branch who attend meetings. Any man or woman over 17 years of age who accepts the aims and objectives of the RBL and is prepared to commit to supporting their branch can become a member. The RBL members' subscription, payable to the RBL, is currently £14.00 per annum.

10. Saint Andrew's Church Report (given by Graeme Pressley – Church warden)

Saint Andrew's has had a break from renovation this year with work proceeding on the plans for a new toilet, new electrical wiring and a new organ installation. We have the OK from the DAC, the OK from the Diocese registrar we just now await the final OK from the Diocese Consistory Court.

However the big news is that due to a new deanery plan, Judith has stood down to allow rapid regrouping of the Parish with a new group made up of Wereham, Wretton, Stoke Ferry, Whittington, and Methwold. We are under the guidance of Barbara Burton and are working to integrate with the new ministry team. Judith is still our legal incumbent and when the legal work is completed we shall have a new incumbent installed.

Janet has started with help from others a group of young people who meeting in the village hall to sing, play and make things. It will not be a thrice annual event occurring during the summer, Christmas and Easter breaks. The two so far have been a great success and it was wonderful to see new young people in the church this Easter.

There has not been a lot of work needed to maintain the church this year as it is now in the best condition it has been for almost 500 years. However the boiler after ten years needed work to repair the wear and tear of hard use.

Maureen and Dick have made a real effort this year and the tower and vestry have been knocked into shape and the whole church glows with polish and love.

The new PCC was voted in this April but we have one spot unfilled and this unfortunately is a show stopper. We need a volunteer to look after our finances and become our treasurer. We need to fill this post prior to the next PCC meeting or we may have to suspend the work of the church as we are not allowed to operate without a treasurer. So, see me afterwards if you can count, are honest, and have a few hours a month to spare.

Overall though, St. Andrew's must be one of the most welcoming churches around with a friendly congregation, and a bright open church which is warm and clean. We also have tea and biscuits every service along with good fellowship in the tower. We would love to see you in the church on Sundays as with our new start we can shape the church use to suit your needs. Please come and speak to us and use your church.

God Bless you all.

11. **West Dereham Village Magazine (given by Paula Kellingray)**

The village magazine has been in circulation for just over a year now and there has been very positive feedback about it from villagers, community groups, and advertisers.

Firstly the villagers have said they like having all the relevant information in a booklet format and find it easier to refer to.

Secondly community groups find it a convenient way of getting information out to the village at a low cost.

Thirdly advertisers have had a good volume of response for their services.

The magazine also has a small circulation outside of the village which means we have increased our distribution over the last 12 months from 250 to 275 copies. This has been achieved with no extra costs being passed on to the contributors and still remains a free magazine.

The magazine made a small surplus of £6.23 last year.

12. **Public Forum**

No matters were raised by parishioners present.

The Chairman commented that she felt this was a healthy set of reports and said thank you and well done to all.

West Dereham Parish Council

Dates of Meetings

West Dereham Parish Council meets monthly, 11 times a year, usually on the first Thursday of each month with the exception of January. Meetings are held in the Village Hall. Agendas for meetings are posted on the Parish Council notice boards and on the Parish Council's website. Every household in the village receives monthly notifications of the meetings including Parish Council news.

Meeting dates for the remainder of 2015 are:

Thursday 5 November

Thursday 3 December

Meetings start at 7.30pm unless otherwise agreed

No meeting is held in January